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HITLER TERROR IN 1935

WITH A CHAPTER
ON FASCIST TERROR
IN AUSTRIA

Published by

Research Department

THE COMMISSION FOR LIBERATION OF WORKERS OF EUROPE

3 West 16th Street, New York, N. Y.



Telephone CHelsea 3-4336

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BEHIND BARBED WIRES . . .

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"They (the critics) forget that eagles are born. Eagles dwell amid the highest mountains. Their eyes are keen and range over the whole land. Those on little hills and in valleys cannot see the eagle; they know nothing of the great open spaces up above. They utter cries of distress and moan in perpetual darkness. But when He swoops down into the valleys on his mighty wings and they hear the rushing of his pinions, they tremble. He is beyond all their expectations; they can only quiver with fear. . . . Our Leader is one of these eagles. A messenger from Heaven, dwelling on the high mountains of virtue, wisdom and strength. No need to prove it. It is a fact, a dispensation of Providence, a supreme command. . . . We must all learn from him. For the virtues of divine religion are the virtues of our Leader. . . ."

"Arbeitertum", organ of the Nazi German Labor Front, April 15, 1935.

• I. THE NAZI RECORD OF 1935

THE murder of Friedrich Husemann, internationally famous labor leader and for twenty-two years president of the German Mine Workers' Federation, — shot "while trying to escape" — has again brought the raging Nazi terror into the open. It has served as a timely reminder to world public opinion that terrorism in Germany has not abated since the early Nazi excesses of 1933. Yet there is a fundamental difference between these early days of the terror and 1935. The lid of governmental pressure is tightly clamped down and very little filters through.

To report time and again innumerable terror acts to which the unhappy German people are subjected, no longer carries news value. Newspaper editors as well as readers have become accustomed to these manifestations of tyranny. Moreover, political considerations abroad often make it opportune to pass them by. The catchword of internal sovereignty advantageously serves to gloss over the facts. Occasionally, however, when wanton murder such as the one committed on the sixty-two year old labor leader, or the repeated kidnappings of German refugees from foreign soil, the steadily mounting number of beheadings and violent anti-Jewish outbreaks become known, world opinion professes to believe that these are only "exceptional cases". In reality, they are the links of a perpetual terror chain which become visible only by coincidence and force of circumstances.

The following report intends to prove conclusively that terror today in 1935 is still as evident and as thoroughly practiced as it was when Nazism reached power in March, 1933. Its forms have become more subtle; its cruelty more refined; its system truly coordinated and made effective to an extent which only Germans can achieve.

The forms of Nazi terror have changed. No longer, or only in rare cases, are Nazi opponents murdered in broad daylight. Slow murder and mistreatment are practiced in stark silence. But as terrorism has receded to dark corners, it has lost nothing of its effectiveness. Terror stalks day and night behind every German citizen. Nobody, not even the

political innocent, can live, speak and attend to his daily affairs without encountering the terror.

Whether Karl, Fritz or Wilhelm belong to a Nazi organization, to the Nazi Labor Front, to the manifold military and semi-military formations of the New Germany; whether Marie, Grete and Luise are readers of their favorite newspaper; whether people high and low are ordered to fly flags, to publicly demonstrate, or to listen to the radio speeches of their leaders; they all are constantly subjected to the terror machinery which has converted Germany into a gigantic prison.

They are figures in the chessboard of German Fascism. There is not the slightest escape from the fine net spun around them. They are sent into the military, labor or agricultural services. They are forced to work on emergency and military projects for starvation wages. They must send their children to schools which destroy in them all that is holy and decent. Their religious beliefs are defiled. Paganism is making them moral cowards. It is this terror, more efficient than its earlier cruel manifestations, which is the ruling feature of the New Germany.

• Labor — Terror's Main Target

The fact that the Nazi regime is resorting to these measures and is compelled to tighten them is in itself proof of its lack of inner stability. At the same time, the combined apparatus of propaganda, police force and agents provocateurs constitute the strongest pillars of the Hitler dictatorship.

The labor movement, once the pride of Germany, is particularly subjected to these terroristic methods. Thousands of cases are known where a carelessly uttered word of criticism or the failure of attending Nazi demonstrations, has been deemed sufficient reason to deprive workers of their jobs. Now we have official documents to prove what the Nazi regime tries to brand as atrocity and lying propaganda abroad. A decision of utmost importance rendered by the State Labor Department at Karlsruhe, Baden, reads: "An employee who leaves his place of work before the playing of the National Anthem or the Horst Wessel song (Nazi anthem), or who does

not participate in mass demonstrations, parades and other public manifestations of his fellow-workers, puts himself consciously beyond the pale of the Volksgemeinschaft (national unity). In doing so, he displays an attitude inimical to the State. His immediate dismissal is justified."

The decision is being used by the Nazi labor organizations to utmost advantage. The district council of the German Labor Front at Berlin has sent out circulars instructing all its locals and factory cells to heed the legal decision and to proceed accordingly.

Similar decisions have been rendered in other parts of the country. The labor court at Mannheim has upheld the dismissal of a former leading trade unionist and chairman of the workers' council because of his "hostile attitude" to the present system. The man had been employed for eleven years in the same factory. He had been arrested by the Nazis on charges which later proved unfounded. He tried to regain his job. The labor court in dismissing his claim for reinstatement, pointed out that he had shown an antagonistic attitude toward Nazism, although no recent evidence was available. The plaintiff's reinstatement, concludes the court, would be dangerous to industrial peace on account of his former position as the workers' spokesman in the factory.

The unemployed are subjected to similar pressure. All labor exchanges and offices throughout the country have been furnished with questionnaires to be answered by the registered unemployed. This questionnaire contains the following item: "Where and for what length of time have you been taken in Schutzhaft (protective custody)?" In other words, the man is compelled to state if he had been arrested and imprisoned by the Nazis. Thus the Hitler regime has succeeded in black-listing all former enemies of the regime.

• Against Small Trades People

In other instances, open terror is practiced against small tradespeople and artisans. The procedure is in almost all cases strikingly similar. The owner of a store or working establishment objects to Nazi provocations. He immediately becomes the target of official hostility and boycott measures.

After public fury has been worked up to a high pitch and the man repeatedly subjected to public brutalities and humiliations, the authorities take a hand. He is arrested, brought before the court, or often sent to a concentration camp without a hearing.

The case of the locksmith Schroeder in Kiel speaks for itself. Schroeder had an apprentice who was a member of the Hitler Youth. Often the boy took days off from work ostensibly for the purpose of attending meetings of his organization. When Schroeder rebuked him and told him that it would be better if he devoted more of his time to learning, the boy began to provoke him systematically. Finally, he reported to the German Labor Front his master's failure to give the Hitler salute. A public drive was started. Threatened with economic ruin, Schroeder voluntarily reported to Nazi headquarters and was led publicly through the main streets, and repeatedly beaten. Large police detachments succeeded in freeing him from the mob. Severely hurt, he was sent to a hospital. He was tried before the Honor Court, fined 200 marks and deprived for three years of his civil and professional rights. The court pointed out that Schroeder's punishment would have been heavier "if he had not been unjustly assailed and cruelly mistreated by the people."

• Medical Science in Hitler's Service

The application of the sterilization law, seemingly directed against the physically and mentally unfit, offers another opportunity to exert pressure upon the people. The extent to which this law is being abused and converted for political purposes is proven by numerous reports from all over Germany. In the district of Muhlheim, Baden, more than 300 persons have been sterilized, most of them sufferers from war diseases. Many more are constantly ordered for examinations. The procedure is often dictated by political considerations. Very few of those ordered for examinations belong to Nazi organizations. It is reliably stated that the threat of sterilization is employed in order to make them join the Nazi party.

According to statistics presented at a recent official exposition held in Berlin early in March, 1935, 189,677 persons, or three out of every thousand German citizens, have been

sterilized. Figures for recent months have not yet been made public. Repeated Catholic protests have resulted only in a stricter application of the sterilization laws.

• Behind Barbed Wires . . .

The herding of political enemies and other anti-Nazis into concentration camps has remained one of the most favorite methods of Nazi oppression. The following detailed cases are indicative of the extent to which the barbarous system of jailing one's enemies behind barbed wires is still being applied.

The peasant Bachmeister of Sarching who had been arrested as a spendthrift, has been sent to the concentration camp Dachau for a period of six months. The worker Hacker of Eibrunn was also sent to Dachau for three months on a charge of having neglected his family. The workers Peter Hofmann, Joseph and Anton Herold were sent there on trumped up charges. The peasant Weichenberger of Gansheim was arrested and sent to a concentration camp because he publicly slapped a member of the Hitler Youth.

In hundreds of other instances insulting remarks about the leader were deemed sufficient to jail the "criminals". According to an order by the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior, people unwilling to work and of "otherwise anti-social character" are liable to imprisonment in a concentration camp for an undetermined length of time. People of anti-social character, in the terminology of Nazism, are of course those who are enemies of the present regime.

The Jewish owners of a glass factory at Fuerth were arrested and imprisoned because "they live in luxurious apartments while their workers live in slums". This is only a convenient pretext, since other "Aryan factory owners" are not molested for the same crime.

The worker Ludwig Weber of Kronach was arrested and jailed for having listened to a radio program from Moscow.

The death of the rabid Nazi leader and Bavarian Minister of Education, Hans Schemm, has also led to the arrest and imprisonment of many people who dared to make unkind remarks about the deceased.

The official and unofficial prisons of Germany are filled with political dissenters and such people who have for one reason or another incurred the wrath of the Nazi leaders. Prison penalties for harmless critical utterances are simply too numerous to be cited. A few characteristic cases may suffice.

August Baer, book dealer of Nuremberg — one year for possessing and reading a foreign newspaper and "using it to support his views in an argument".

Two editors of the "Essener Volkszeitung" — three months each for publishing an erroneous report that a man sentenced to death had been reprieved.

A woman—10 (ten) months for spreading uncomplimentary tales about the Leader.

Karl Voigtlander of Dresden—ten months for critical remarks against the Government.

Johannes Hof — eight months for spiteful remarks against Prime Minister Goering.

Albin Stroebe of Leubnitz—fourteen months for insulting the Leader.

Max Kaufman, Georg Huscher and Kurt Freitag — one year, nine months and six months respectively, for the same "crime".

The auctioneer Pius Dagenhart of Memmingen—indefinite term in prison for dishonoring the Nazi party brown shirt by putting the shirts of former storm troopers up for auction.

Susanne Jentsch of Dresden — seven months for having written to her brother in Basle, Switzerland, that food conditions in Germany were very bad.

Willi Hoehnelt of Riesa—one year for transmitting to his son in Canada "untrue statements about conditions in Germany".

A similar case is reported from Leipzig where a man was sentenced to five months in prison for having written to friends in Vienna that everybody in Germany "who dares to express his dissatisfaction must face a judge".

A worker Kurt Walter of Eibenstock received ten months for a similar offense. He had written to friends in the Saar Territory about the miserable conditions of the German workers and the loss of their rights.

In Sulzbach, Saar, the sixty-nine year old worker Petri and his wife were arrested and jailed for having remarked to friends that Hitler had not been "of any good to the Saar".

Not a single part of Germany is free from similar happenings and brutal persecutions of people whose sole crime it is to voice their personal opinions. It must be borne in mind that these punishments are meted out to men and women who do not participate in the bitter underground struggle against Nazism. The full force of the terror is brought to bear upon those who are working in the ranks of the illegal movement for the recovery of the people's rights against Fascist oppression.

• A Terror Rage Against Anti-Nazis

The terror against the underground anti-Nazi movement is steadily increasing, and often characterized by sudden waves of persecution sweeping whole parts of the country. According to reports from South and Northwestern Germany, the Gestapo (state secret police) is resorting to more pressure than ever before. Suddenly, whole street blocks are raided and hundreds of people arrested for no reason whatsoever. The method is simply to instill in the people deep fear and horror. The police attacks are now mainly directed against former Social-Democrats and trade unionists whom the Nazi regime has learned to recognize and fear as their most uncompromising enemies.

The Communist bogey is only a pretext; Nazi authorities confirm openly that the main resistance comes from the ranks of the members of the old Socialist and labor movement, who have remained true to their principles. All former officers of the dissolved trade unions and the Social-Democratic party are kept under close observation. The situation is best described in a report from Northwestern Germany. "No longer do people worry about right and wrong. Conditions are very bad, and since it will not do to blame Hitler for them, the Marxists are made the scapegoat and are arrested." However, while the police terror is unsuccessfully trying to destroy the illegal forces, everything is being done to hide the terror methods in darkest secrecy.

Very often illegal underground workers in Germany are informed from abroad about arrests of their comrades. While the Nazi press is ordered to make a big display of Communist arrests, the arrests of trade unionists, Socialists and other opponents are glossed over. The intent of this policy is to play up the Bolshevik scare for all that it is worth, and at the same time to make it appear that the other groups are not active.

Interesting proof was given at the trial against Emil and Eugen Kern, father and son, for distribution of illegal and treasonable literature. The defendants had been arrested with a few copies of "Sozialistische Aktion" which the court and the press described as a Communist sheet smuggled in from abroad. In reality, "Sozialistische Aktion" is an illegal paper of the German Social-Democratic party, published in Prague and distributed in hundreds of thousands of copies throughout Germany. The defendants were found guilty and sentenced to prison terms of one year and seven months.

For having attempted to free the war crippled former Social-Democratic Reichstag member, Mierendorff, from a concentration camp where he has been held for more than two years, the workers Henk, Kalvie, Altermum, Gräber, Neu-reuther, Jattschott, and Laier were sentenced to prison terms ranging from eight to twenty months.

• Police Provocations and Brutalities

The following reports concerning the terror methods of the state secret police have been carefully checked in order to protect our sources of information as well as the lives of the prisoners and their relatives. No exact number of prisoners or those under police arrest is available. Thousands of new arrests have taken place during recent months, due to the provocative methods and the extensive spy system introduced by the Nazi regime. A trustworthy correspondent reports:

"Occasionally, well-known former trade unionists and Socialists are visited by men who identify themselves by membership cards of the dissolved labor organizations and an official slip of paper stating that the man has just been dismissed from a concentration camp. The visitor explains the possession of his trade union and party papers with the fact

that he was able to give them to trusted friends shortly before his arrest. He intends to leave Germany, mainly because the police are after him again; he needs money and connections. Most of the men approached give him some money to reach the next city, and also some addresses of friends who are likely to help him further.

"These men are secret agents trying to ascertain the underground connections and channels through which anti-Nazi labor is working. In this way the police have succeeded in getting hundreds of addresses and names of our best men and women collaborators. This partly explains why thousands of people have recently been arrested, often for no visible reason and in a most mysterious manner."

The police also take care that illegal material is distributed through their agents in factories, etc., in order to establish connections with the genuine underground movement. In the provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia arrests have been especially numerous, although nothing appeared in the press. The arrests took place in the early morning hours. In one night alone over one hundred men were arrested in their homes in an industrial city in the Ruhr, as well as three hundred miners returning from the night shift.

In Saxony similar police actions are being reported. In Upper Silesia wholesale arrests followed the effective use of tens of thousands of anti-Nazi stickers in the cities and villages. Even the armories and military barracks were plastered with them. Those arrested were brutally mistreated. Most of them have been sent to concentration camps, while prominent prisoners are kept in police detention cells in order to extract from them valuable information.

• Nazism Against the Churches

The number of ministers of the Protestant opposition confined in concentration camps and prisons amounted to more than fifty. Public pressure, however, and the fear of religious conflicts forced the Nazi authorities to release them. The number of their imprisoned supporters fighting the pagan trend in the Nazified Protestant churches still amounts to several hundred; new arrests are recorded daily. Under the pretext

of violation of German foreign exchange regulations the Nazi regime has struck a severe blow at the Catholic opposition. Fifty-four Catholic orders have been raided and many nuns and monks arrested.

According to Catholic sources, many of those jailed had been in solitary retreat for years and scarcely knew of Adolf Hitler and the foreign exchange laws. Heavy penalties have been meted out. Some of those arrested are ill and old. The conflict between the Catholic Church and the Third Reich is assuming serious proportions. One of the latest blows has been the compulsory transference of tens of thousands of Catholic children to non-religious schools, as well as the arrest of members of the Catholic youth organizations returning from Rome where they had been received by the Pope. The Catholic youngsters were stripped of their uniforms and their religious medals and mementoes.

At the moment of writing the latent conflict between Nazism and Catholicism has been brought to a climax by an edict of the Prussian Premier General Goering, attacking Catholicism all along the line and ordering the authorities to employ "all their legal weapons" against the Catholic clergy as well as against the Catholic Youth organizations, whose activities are considered inimical to the Nazi State. The edict of General Goering, who, as the head of the Reich's State Secret Police is mainly responsible for the outrages of the Nazi regime, effectively muzzles the Catholic Church and creates for the Catholics a situation similar to the one from which the Protestants are suffering.

• Police Trick Returning Refugees

The attempts of the police to induce refugees to return to Germany, and then to force damaging confessions from them, are also rapidly becoming known. Some refugees who recently returned to Germany and are now in prison are the Social-Democrat Lorenz of Baerenstein; the labor official Jaehnigen of Chemnitz, who was arrested immediately after his return and whose imprisonment has led to a wave of arrests; the trade-unionists Pille and Gross, who were also forced to make so-called confessions. The return of the well-

known Socialist woman, Mrs. Weck-Werdau, from abroad has found a tragic end. Rather than submit to abuses by the police, she committed suicide.

• The Truth Behind Atrocity Stories

The cruel mistreatment of prisoners by the police, often branded as atrocity stories, is again overwhelmingly confirmed. These methods are applied to Socialists, Communists, Catholics, Protestants and Jews alike. In one instance just reported from Western Germany, the police succeeded quite accidentally in discovering illegal, underground activities, jointly conducted by young trade-unionists and the Catholic Youth. The first few arrests were accompanied by such brutality that it is simply impossible to describe them in detail. More than 180 youngsters have been arrested. One young worker who lost control of himself and hit back at his torturer, was beaten to death. Another young worker subjected to similar treatment died shortly afterward, and two others are in a hopeless condition in a hospital.

In Essen the police brutalities are directed by the police commissioner Vaupel. Vaupel together with a black shirt storm troop leader whose name is unknown, the police commissioner Stratnek, the police secretary Schroeder, and the Nazi storm trooper Lipicki, have constituted a veritable reign of terror. In one instance, Vaupel placed a cruelly beaten Communist prisoner within the window frame and shot him to death. The body fell into the street. Vaupel justified his act with the usual explanation that the prisoner was trying to escape.

In Leipzig and other cities in Saxony the examinations of the prisoners by the police are usually accompanied by severe mistreatment. The only difference between last year and this year is that the police officials have now taken the place of the Nazi torturers, a correspondent reports. In Dortmund the prisoners are subjected to third degree methods with their heads swathed in heavy rags. In Leipzig the cries of the agonized prisoners were heard in the street and led to public protests by prominent citizens. Whether the higher authorities have proceeded against the guilty police officials is not known.

The tragic death of the former trade-union functionary Otto in Dresden bares the Nazi system in all its horror. Otto, who was kept in the police prison at Dresden, had been repeatedly subjected to terrible beatings and mistreatment by orders of the police commissioner Weser. Finally, seized by desperation, he hit Weser, and was instantly beaten to death. The relatives of the dead man were not permitted to see the body.

The treatment in the state penitentiaries is not much different. In Kleinmansdorf near Leipzig a new prison for "political criminals" has been opened. The prison guards are Nazi storm troopers who treat their prisoners in the most brutal manner. The prisoners are often awakened at night for no reason whatsoever and beaten. The food is very poor. In some cases the prisoners were forced to clean the floors with their toothbrushes. It seems that the prisoners are subjected to this treatment for the sole purpose of forcing them to commit suicide.

At the state prison Bautzen bread rations are no longer distributed daily but only every fourth day. The result is that most of the prisoners are suffering from starvation. One prisoner who tried to return his stale bread was given an additional prison term. In many other cases, prisoners who had just finished their terms were immediately rearrested and are now kept in protective custody without a hearing or a trial. In many prisons, especially in Silesia, the prisoners are forced to work thirteen hours daily including Sunday. The articles made in these prisons are for military purposes.

In the prisons of North-Schleswig daily beatings are common features. Visitors report that the faces of the prisoners bear unmistakable signs of beatings. Questions are met with the response that they, the prisoners, have suffered a slight accident. The food is equally poor in contrast to former years. Often the prisoners receive one salted herring once a week together with stale bread, and a black drink for coffee.

The wives and relatives of men kept in protective custody have been recently instructed to furnish fresh laundry and underwear. No official or private welfare agency takes care of them. Political prisoners are treated with much less consid-

eration than ordinary criminals; the money appropriated for their daily subsistence is scarcely above the starvation level.

Chicaneries against the prisoners are often of a petty and senseless nature. In some cases Social-Democratic prisoners are permitted to receive visits of their relatives every three weeks only for five minutes. No food or literature can be sent to them; only money, which usually goes into the wrong pockets. The trade-unionist Willi Muth, 34 years old, from Weppertal, who had been arrested with his wife, committed suicide according to the authorities. This happened shortly after his wife had been freed. His friends deny stoutly that he had contemplated suicide. All those attending his funeral were photographed by the police.

• Nazism Breeds Murder

The spirit which animates the concentration camps and the Nazi jailers has been faithfully described in Gerhart Seger's book "Concentration Camp Oramienburg" and other similar publications. Official confirmation has been obtained by the publication of the administrative rules of the concentration camp Lichtenburg in the Manchester Guardian of January 10th, 1935, and the official regulations for the application and administration of protective custody as published in the German official Gazette of March 6th, 1935.

Reports occasionally smuggled out of various concentration camps permit a clear insight into the misery and suffering to which the inmates are subjected. In the camp Sachsenburg, where many churchmen are kept, conditions have gone from bad to worse. The prisoners after attending to their hard daily work as road laborers, are forced to wait on their guards, serve their food, keep their clothes clean, etc. The slightest neglect or oversight is being used by the guards as an excuse for beatings and insults. Every outgoing or incoming letter is subjected to strict censorship. No details are permitted to reach the outside world.

It is generally observed that people after their dismissal from concentration camps and prisons refuse to tell of their experiences. They are so thoroughly intimidated that no information can be gained from them. Occasional remarks such

as "You have no idea; some time later I will tell you things; you will be surprised", indicate what the experiences of these men must have been.

Camp Papenburg is another example of utmost terror. Early in January, 1935 the body of the innkeeper Hermes from Burgermoor was found in a ditch. Hermes had been murdered. He is said to have been killed by Nazi camp guards who were anxious to wipe out their indebtedness to the innkeeper. Hermes also knew too much of the happenings within the concentration camp. A few weeks ago a new camp section affording space for one thousand more prisoners was opened.

The following police order (all names have been deleted) shows the treatment which is in store for dismissed prisoners:

"The dismissed X. has to report daily to his local police at a given hour. Every attempt to meet his former political friends in his home and outside of it, is absolutely forbidden. Any political activity directed against the Nazi State, as well as any remark dealing with measures or acts of the State leadership, and of those organizations supporting the new State, are strictly forbidden. He is also forbidden to leave his home after a given hour. Any attempt to act against these rules will be punished by four weeks in prison or eventually higher penalties and renewed protective custody."

• Recent Terror Sentences

To ascertain the exact number of anti-Hitlerites who paid with their lives and are imprisoned in concentration camps has proven absolutely impossible. During April and early May 1935 alone, at least 15 political murders have been recorded, among them the former Social-Democratic member of the Saxonian Diet Helene Glatzer, the trade union officials Christian Ferkel and Hans Schneider, the Socialist deputies Scheidt and Jurgesen, the Socialist municipal councillor Moertel and a number of as yet unidentified workers. The following terror sentences pronounced during recent months are chosen from thousands of similar cases.

Trials against 150 trade-unionists are at present pending before the courts in Hamburg. At the first of these trials the defendants Schmedeman, Ropers, Weidt and Schumann were sentenced to hard labor for periods ranging from one and a half years to two and a half years; and other prisoners from seven months to one year in prison. The defendants had committed the "crime" of collecting money for the suffering relatives of political prisoners. It was brought out at the court sessions that the prisoners had been brutally mistreated and forced to sign confessions.

A monster trial against sixty-eight (68) Social-Democrats in Muenchen ended with fifty-seven (57) of the sixty-eight defendants being found guilty and sentenced to a total of 57 years, 9 months hard labor and 33 years, two months in prison. The defendants were accused of having established political contacts with Socialist emigres and of having distributed underground literature in their home cities.

The trade-unionist Erich Piegsa was sentenced by the Supreme Court of Breslau to three and a half years of hard labor for distribution of treasonable literature. Seven Socialist workers in Striegau, Silesia, suffered similar penalties. The People's Court at Breslau also meted out severe penalties to the trade-unionists Willi Beiersdorf, Meta Herbst, Kasper and the two Theimert brothers. Many others are awaiting trial.

Hans Stephan, Breslau, and Richard Kirchner, Liebau, were sentenced to two and a half years hard labor for illegal activities. Their co-defendants suffered similar prison penalties. The defendants testified that they had been beaten by the police and forced to confess to deeds of which they knew nothing.

The members of the Socialist Labor Youth, Beckmann, Hertel and Muehle, were sentenced to nine months, and the girl Elli Spaete, under legal age, to six months in prison. According to the authorities, they had attempted to revive and continue the Labor Youth organizations.

Eleven workers were sentenced to long prison terms by the court at Breslau for distribution of illegal literature. One

of them, a young miner, Striesse, had been tortured by the police.

Sentences pronounced by the courts in Southwestern Germany are equally severe. We mention only the two workers Theodor Kunz and Richard Zoller of Karlsruhe, who were sentenced to ten months and six months in prison, respectively, for having distributed a few copies of the illegal newspaper "Neuer Vorwärts." At Mannheim seven workers were sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to three years for similar crimes. In Saxony the well-known Socialist Richard Lohmann was sentenced to twelve years hard labor for having distributed hundreds of copies of the illegal paper "Sozialistische Aktion" in Leipzig. His death was reported a few weeks ago.

In Annaberg a trial against members of the Republican Reichsbanner organization, who during the election night of March 5, 1933 had tried to defend the property of labor organizations against Nazi attacks, ended with heavy sentences. It must be kept in mind that these defendants have been in concentration camp since 1933. The court refused to deduct the terms already served from the new sentences. It is already indicated that the prisoners will under no circumstances be freed, even after the expiration of their terms. A young woman, Erna Koehler of Sebnitz, was sentenced to one and a half years hard labor for attempting to work for a banned political party.

In Northern Germany the trials for treason and illegal activities are simply too numerous to mention. Prison terms range from one to three years. The worker Wilhelm Dreyer of Billstedt was sentenced to one and a half years hard labor for the distribution of a few copies of an illegal paper. The two former labor functionaries, Richard Rosch and Karl Petersen, were sentenced to five years hard labor each for attempting to smuggle illegal literature from Denmark into Germany. Eight anti-Fascists in Bremen were sentenced to prison terms from nine months to two years for possession of a typewriter used for illegal work. The twenty-seven year old worker Peter Holm, who acted as courier between laborites in Denmark and Germany, was sentenced to three and a half years hard labor. For the possession of one copy of the

"Neuer Vorwärts" the two workers Johannes Sass and August Kruse from Flensburg, were sentenced to three months in prison.

• Justice and Civilization Defiled

Justice has become the slave of Nazism. The judges submit to Nazi terror and are equally anxious to exercise the same terror against all Nazi opponents coming before them. Insulting remarks about the leader Hitler have been found by the German Supreme Court at Leipzig as legally acceptable grounds for divorce. A court at Sulza recently ruled that marriages between Jews and non-Jews must be regarded as "immoral relationships".

The new German penal code now in preparation will become an instrument of terror closely resembling the justice of the Dark Ages. It will feature capital punishment, return to early tribal laws and "civil death", meaning the ostracising and outlawing of persons guilty in Nazi eyes. Its main blows are directed against independent labor and pacifists and other anti-military minded people, who will be subject to death penalties in time of war, and of life imprisonment in time of danger of war.

All rules of civilization have been trampled upon. At the same time, the machinery of justice is being used to protect guilty Nazis. The new law bluntly states that killings from excusable violent emotion — as for instance the Nazi methods against their opponents — will be classified as merely manslaughter and lightly punished. The Nazi burgomaster Bauer of Seld, Bavaria was acquitted of perjury and embezzlement charges although overwhelming proof of his guilt had been presented. Even the Nazi prosecutor was forced to admit that Bauer was guilty in at least seven cases and that he had also committed perjury as a witness under oath.

The Nazis insist that actions of their party and its affiliated bodies must not be subject to court decisions. These claims are not only in accordance with the totalitarian principle, but they are also brought forward for obvious practical reasons. To divorce Nazi officialdom from the judicial system and to make them independent of court decisions, simply means that they can do whatever they want without being subjected to corrective measures.

While these claims are not legally recognized, they are obeyed in fact. In only one instance has a German court dared to pronounce sentence against the Nazi party of Westphalia. The party was sentenced to pay damages for the illegal appropriation of the well-known daily "Dortmunder Generalanzeiger".

Immediately afterwards, however, a law was put into effect permitting the Nazi Reichs Minister of the Interior to decide and settle such civil matters and claims against the party at his own discretion. In some cases, judges have been courageous enough to withstand Nazi pressure and to proceed according to their convictions and knowledge. Few as these instances are, these dissenters have been invariably weeded out and replaced by obedient instruments of the Hitler terror.

• Jews Ousted from Education

The terror in the educational field mainly exercised against the Jews, cannot be lightly passed by. According to official figures, the number of non-Aryan students at the German universities decreased from 3,950 in the pre-Hitler year 1932, to 1,900 in the summer of 1933, a few months after Hitler had taken power. In the following winter term, not a single new Jewish student was admitted. At the same time, only 590 out of a total of 87,000 men students were Jewish; and only thirteen (13) of these attended the regular courses. Of 15,000 women students only 223 were Jewish. Since then the figures have decreased perceptibly.

• An Unbroken Record of Horrors

To close this study of the recent Hitler terror, it may suffice to call attention to the Nazi "achievements" during the year from June, 1933 to June, 1934. During this period two hundred and twelve (212) anti-Nazis were put to death. Prison sentences of approximately 130,000 years were meted out to 280-308 persons. In other words, the prison terms pronounced against anti-Nazis during the first year of the Hitler terror average one day for each of the approximately 35,000,000 adults of Germany. These figures reflect only the legal penalties inflicted by the courts.

No account has been taken of the innumerable murders and other acts of Nazi violence. The results of the Nazi blood purge of June 30, 1934 are ignored. The hundreds of persons "shot while trying to escape" are conveniently overlooked. The tens of thousands of prisoners herded together in concentration camps in violation of judicial rule, as well as the innumerable so-called suicides, are forgotten. In the same year more than 13,000 German citizens were deprived of their nationality.

The period from June, 1934 to summer, 1935 has not been less cruel and violent. In January, 1935 alone prison sentences totalling 679 years were handed down indicating a steady acceleration of the terror wave. According to incomplete official figures, sentences totalling 5,607 years at hard labor and 1,988 years in prison were passed against 2,418 "political offenders" during the first half of 1935. 93 of these were women.

Behind the veils of secrecy there rests an unbroken and unparralleled record of terror. This is Fascism and this is what Fascism through the manifestations of so-called German National-Socialism has done to the German people.

* * *

• II. FASCIST MADNESS IN AUSTRIA

In Austria democratic government and the people's liberties have again given way to a regime of oppression and persecutions. Conditions today are far worse than those prevailing in the latter part of the 19th century, when the Austrian people under the Metternich rule were submitted to governmental outrages.

The Austrian citizen has been deprived of all his rights. Police officials pronounce sentences without permitting the accused legal advice or appeal to a judicial court. According to government instructions, no prison sentence under six months can be appealed, with the result that the police officials pass consecutive sentences of six months each for a different offense against the present Austro-Fascist regime. The prisoner is then turned over to the court where he is again prosecuted and sentenced for the same offense. After these experiences the prisoner is turned over to an "Anhaltelager", similar to a German concentration camp, and kept there for an unlimited period. A camp for women prisoners has recently been established in a former police prison in Vienna.

The Austro-Fascist regime resorts to those methods fully realizing that the overwhelming part of the population of Austria is hostile to it. But here as in Germany pressure is only resulting in counter-pressure and stiffening resistance on the part of the oppressed opposition. In many cases police and government officials use the powers given to them to vent their spleen against personal enemies.

Beatings and insults are the standing order of the day in the prisons and police stations. The self-righteous pose of the Austrian government protesting against persecutions and mistreatments in Nazi Germany is hypocritical. Statements taken from former prisoners show that they have been in no way better treated than the prisoners of the Nazis. They were systematically beaten with rubber truncheons until they broke down and then were forced to sign a document stating that they had confessed "under no compulsion whatsoever". The judges, intimidated by the almighty police, do not dare to take any action against the guilty officials; they profess to be-

lieve that the prisoners' repudiations of their extorted confessions are lies.

According to eye witnesses the heroic young worker Joseph Gerl was mistreated and tortured by police officials who took him prisoner during the days of the February street fighting. His ribs were broken, his body and face covered with blood, and he was unable to stand up at the court martial, where he was sentenced to death. He was executed. Only recently a police official in Graz was punished because he had admonished other officials for their mistreatment of prisoners and told them that the prisoners are "human beings after all".

• Fascism Spreads Poison Everywhere

Austria is covered by a gigantic net of spies and agents provocateurs. The congested workers districts are the main scenes of their activities. The proverbial Austrian friendliness has been replaced by general distrust and suspicions. Even harmless talks and humorous remarks are reported to the police and often result in heavy prison sentences. A municipal employee expressed in a congratulatory letter to a colleague who had just become a father the hope that the child would live to witness other times. He was immediately dismissed. Children are also used to spy on their parents and have been instructed in the schools not to be deterred by comradely feelings and family ties. As a result, the children have become very wary and mistrust each other. Instances like these prove the moral deterioration that is gradually taking place in the Austrian school system and amongst the people.

According to official statistics 38,132 arrests and 106,319 house searches have been recorded from March 15, 1933 to December, 1934. 12,276 of those arrested were Social-Democrats; 6,775 Communists, and the rest Nazis and others. The workers formerly organized in their own trade unions and in the Social-Democratic Party are especially subjected to police persecutions. The police president Steinhäusel, who was later accused of conspiracy and participation in the murder of Chancellor Dollfuss, used his office to divert official suspicions

from the Nazis and to direct them against the workers who were arrested by the thousands.

May 1st and other days dear to the Austrian worker are usually the occasion for mass arrests. But despite all persecutions against the Austrian working masses, most of the workers have remained loyal to their principles. The distribution of the illegal labor and Socialist papers is increasing. At the same time the number of those who have been until recently only sympathizers to the powerful Austrian labor movement is steadily growing; they are now willing to participate in the open struggle against the tyrants.

• Persecutions Without End

The following cases illustrate the methods used by the police against the anti-Fascist opponents. The former municipal councillor of Vienna Edmund Reismann was arrested in October, 1934 and accused of being active for the Socialists. The police were unable to prove the charge, but Reismann was nevertheless sentenced to five months in prison. In March, 1935, Reismann was turned over to the judicial authorities and sentenced to another three weeks on an insignificant charge. Freed on April 12, 1935, Reismann was immediately rearrested and sent to the concentration camp at Wollersdorf for six months.

The worker Jollinger, who was accused of harboring illegal material, succeeded in escaping from arrest. His wife was arrested, her ten months old child taken away from her. The woman, who is suffering from tuberculosis, suffered a nervous breakdown. Despite a municipal doctor's effort to secure her liberation, she was kept for two weeks in the police prison. Her cell had no bedding; the food was miserable. Relatives who tried to furnish her with linen and food were sent away and threatened.

The member of the Social-Democratic Party Executive Committee Rosa Jochmann was arrested last August and sentenced to six weeks in prison for illegal activities. Later she was sentenced to an additional six weeks in a police prison and then turned over to the court. After a further six months in prison she was finally charged with high treason and sentenced to an additional year of hard labor.

The worker Bodensteiner at Bruck, father of five children, lost his job after the February street fighting. He succeeded in sending his oldest boy to Soviet Russia and placing him there in a children's sanatorium. A letter written by the child was intercepted by the authorities whereupon Bodensteiner was arrested and accused of sympathies with Russia. He was sentenced to six months.

The former editorial writer of the "Arbeiterzeitung", Pav, was sentenced to six months in prison for illegal activities and turned over to the prosecuting attorney on a charge of high treason. The investigation, however, proved the charges unfounded. Nevertheless, Pav, who is a very sick man, was immediately rearrested after having served the six months, and sent to the concentration camp at Wollersdorf for an undetermined length of time.

Rather than submit to constant persecutions by the police the well known former labor deputy and teacher Frieda Rossbacher of Graz, committed suicide by hanging. Following the civil war she had lost her job as teacher and had opened a restaurant. When she gave a meal to a trade unionist who had just been released from prison, she was called before the police and threatened with the loss of her license on account of her "support of Marxists".

Max Kundermann was sentenced to fourteen days in prison for continuing work for the suppressed Social-Democratic party as an official of the Free Religious Community Center and numerous welfare organizations connected with it.

• Labor Asks Freedom

The bad treatment of prisoners has even been confirmed in government statements. Hunger strikes of labor and other anti-Fascist prisoners are spreading. The authorities are trying to suppress them by putting the strike leaders in irons and mistreating them. The brutal suppression of organized labor is also leading to spontaneous outbursts which are giving the government continuous cause for alarm. The funeral of Anton Hueber, one of the builders of the powerful Austrian labor movement, was made an impressive anti-Fascist demon-

stration in which many former labor and Socialist leaders joined. When the former Labor deputy Wittmaier shouted across the grave "Give us back labor's property which you have stolen," he and others were immediately arrested. Wreaths of red carnations, regarded as the labor emblem, were barred from the funeral.

Fascist rule in Austria can last only as long as it relies on the bayonets and machine guns of the army forces, and the support of Fascist Italy. More than 80 percent of the Austrian people are straining at the leash of Fascism, and are prepared to overthrow it as soon as opportunity offers itself. The day is not far when the yoke of tyranny will be thrown off and liberty be restored to the Austrian masses accustomed to the exercise of their democratic rights.

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OTHER "LABOR CHEST" PUBLICATIONS

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Fascism and Nazism inevitably reduce the worker's standard of living. Vast military armaments are financed exclusively at his expense, through wage reductions and higher food costs.

This is exactly what happened in Nazi Germany. Hitler destroyed the once-powerful German trade union movement, one of the finest in the world, and forcibly seized its accumulated property valued at more than \$250,000,000. He abolished the right to strike and of collective bargaining. Similar conditions prevail in Fascist Italy and Austria.

The American Federation of Labor, because of these conditions in Nazi Germany, adopted the boycott against German goods and services in 1933. At the convention last October, the A. F. of L. reaffirmed the boycott and approved the formation of the Chest for Liberation of Workers of Europe, commonly called the "Labor Chest." **The purposes of the Labor Chest are to combat Fascism (Nazism), emphasize the boycott against Nazi German goods, and to raise funds for the relief of Labor victims of European Dictatorships.**

American trade unionist! Remember your oppressed brother-workers under Hitlerism and Fascism, deprived of all real labor and personal-liberty rights! Support the Labor Chest and its activities—cooperate with your local Chest Committee! If a Chest Committee has not already been appointed in your city, urge the appropriate local labor officials to appoint one or communicate directly with this office. **Chest for Liberation of Workers of Europe, 3 West 16th Street, New York City.**

Be on your guard against the rise of Fascism (Nazism) in our country—its advent to power would mean the destruction of all the existing rights enjoyed by American Organized Labor!

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